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Findings from the Draft Assessment: Twelve Focus Areas and Preliminary Need for Change Statements

Santa Fe National Forest

New Mexico

Forest Service Santa Fe National Forest October 2015

Findings from the Draft Assessment: Twelve focus areas and preliminary need for change statements.

The Santa Fe National Forest has completed a draft assessment report as required by the USDA Forest Service's 2012 Planning Rule (36 CFR 219). The assessment is the first phase of the forest plan revision process and provides a baseline of current conditions and trends for 15 resource topics on the Santa Fe National Forest. The full draft assessment report can be found online at www.fs.usda.gov/goto/santafeforestplan under "documents".

The assessment report is used to help identify portions of the current forest plan that are working well, or meeting desired management objectives, and those that are not. Areas that are not working well inform "need for change" statements. Need for change statements are general, do not provide plan direction, nor necessarily discuss how the plan will address these issues. Rather, they form the bridge between the identification of resource conditions and trends in the assessment and the development of the revised forest plan by presenting where and how the revised forest plan needs to be different from the current plan. These statements provide focus into the second phase of planning, the development of the revised plan, where plan components are created to help ensure management meets desired conditions for each resource.

This document highlights twelve resources that, according to findings from the draft assessment, have the greatest needs for different plan direction. For each of these resources, the assessment found that current conditions are not meeting management objectives for various reasons. Those conditions and reasons are summarized for each of the twelve resources below. In addition, preliminary need for change statements are provided for each of these focus resources.

The intent of identifying and discussing the twelve areas below is that they have the greatest need to change both among all the resources and within themselves. Although the areas discussed here are each, and as a whole, far departed from where we would like them to be under current management direction, it does not mean that all instances within the resource are in jeopardy. For example, although the trail system as a whole has issues with poorly designed and located trails, there are still many trails that are popular and well designed. Resources not highlighted here tend to have more instances where current plan direction is working as designed, although there may still be specific cases where there are needs for change in plan direction. Preliminary need for change statements for many of these other resources are listed at the end of this document. In contrast, each of the twelve focus resources below has many components of existing plan direction that require change. For example, the recreation resource has issues around both developed and dispersed camp sites, trails, and overall sustainability. More can be learned about all resources including the twelve below in the full assessment report.

Need for change statements on the twelve focus resources below will be the primary points of discussion at ten public meetings held in communities around the Santa Fe National Forest in October and November 2015. The public can provide input recommending new need for change statements or suggesting edits to existing statements at these public meetings or by submitting recommendations prior to December 4, 2015.

Over all resources

Monitoring:

The purpose of monitoring and evaluation is to determine if our management is meeting conditions and objectives laid out by the Forest Plan. However, the type and scale of monitoring in the current plan does not always answer those questions. The current monitoring plan is lengthy, and the forest has had a difficult time carrying out all components of the program as a result of increasingly limited resources. The monitoring questions are often focused on very prescriptive components of the forest plan, such as comparing actual and planned outputs for timber harvest. Also, monitoring components do not take into account how monitoring is conducted beyond the Santa Fe NF boundary, limiting the ability to compare and integrate monitoring data of surrounding areas and limiting the ability to compare resources on the forest with their status at a larger context scale or even between neighboring forests. Finally, the monitoring plan has not been amended since the current forest plan was published in 1987, and it is out of date with current science and trends in resources, such as the emergence of new recreational opportunities. Since monitoring is an essential component of adaptive management, the problems cited above make it difficult to determine if resource management as described by the plan is working as desired.

Plan Need for Change

1. There is need for a monitoring program based on desired conditions and a responsive adaptive management program.
2. There is a need to include plan direction regarding potential climate change impacts such as increases in storm events, uncharacteristic wildfire, flooding, and other extreme weather. The 2012 Planning Rule requires monitoring for measurable changes on the plan area related to climate change and other stressors that may be affecting the plan area. Effective measures for monitoring these stressors will need to be identified.
3. There is need for monitoring components that look at the status of resources at the forest scale (within the Santa Fe National Forest), in the context of their larger scale at the landscape level.

Relationships & Partners:

Relationships are a key factor that can impact the success of how the forest plan is implemented. With the challenges faced by the Forest today, strong relationships are not a convenience, but a requirement in order to protect the land and serve the people. Some relationships are improving, including those with tribes and pueblos. Others have a long history of turmoil with the Forest Service, such as relationships with range permitees. In addition, the forest does not always capitalize on partners who are willing to help. For example, stakeholder involvement is not reaching its potential for the recreation resource, resulting in missed opportunities for positive interactions. Finally, the Forest struggles to reach all stakeholders, which include both rural and

urban communities and customers, and relationships are weak because of this. Poor relationships are costly because they can cause increased time and energy through the planning process, misperceptions and miscommunications regarding the Forest's intentions and actions, and ultimately negatively impact resource management. While the forest plan cannot provide direction beyond the scope of managing resources, such as individuals, beyond the Santa Fe National Forest, better relationships and partners may be part of strategies that help to achieve resource desired conditions.

Plan Need for Change

1. There is a need to include management approaches that build stronger relationships and incorporate strategies that prioritize partnerships including but not limited to state and federal agencies, tribal governments, recreational and forest user groups, environmental groups, users with historic ties to the forest, and youth groups.
2. There is a need for management approaches that can effectively encourage and leverage partners and volunteers for project and monitoring activities.

Vegetation

Frequent Fire (Low Severity) Systems:

Fire exclusion and past management activities have led to the greatest departure from historical conditions of all ecosystems found on the Santa Fe NF. Fire dependent ERUs including Ponderosa Pine, Mixed Conifer-Frequent Fire Forests, Juniper Grasslands, Pinon-Juniper Grasslands, Montane Subalpine Grasslands, and Colorado Plateau/Great Basin Grasslands, are at high risk of loss. Historical selective logging (also known as "high-grading"), removed the largest and most fire resistant trees in stands. Overgrazing during 19th and early 20th century limited fine fuels (forbs and grasses) that typically carried frequent low severity fire on the ground. Fragmentation or the construction of roads, trails, and railroad systems also impeded the spread of frequent, low-severity wildfires across the landscape. Along with early 20th century fire suppression, these changes to the landscape have contributed to higher densities of trees, increased fuel loadings, uncharacteristic wildfire, and altered species composition from mature, fire tolerant species toward shade-tolerant, less fire-resistant species.

The encroachment of shade tolerant species also increase fuel loadings and can act as ladder fuels, helping surface fire to climb into the canopy of tree crowns and resulting in increased occurrences of crown fire. The increased density of tree groups as a result of the infill of canopy gaps by tree and woody species has also reduced the density and vigor of herbaceous understory plants in forested and woodland types. Increased stand densities also contribute to increased competition amongst trees for resources (increased stress), especially during periods of extended drought. This stress makes the trees more susceptible to insect and disease outbreaks and uncharacteristic proportions of high-severity, stand replacing fire.

Uncharacteristic fires can lead to further detrimental impacts including soils which repel water (hydrophobic soils), erosion, and type conversions ultimately threatening the viability of these systems.

Plan Need for Change

1. There is a need for desired conditions for fire adapted vegetation types that recognize the natural role of fire in the landscape.
2. There is a need for plan direction that allows fire managers the flexibility to manage naturally ignited fires to meet resource objectives based on site specific (e.g., fuel conditions, topography, safety concerns and values), and weather conditions opposed to general management area direction that dictates management response. These actions include the use of fire to reduce excess fuels, moderating the risk of future high-intensity fires, improving wildlife and range habitat, encouraging aspen regeneration, and improving watershed and overall forest health.
3. There is a need for management direction that encourages an integrated resource approach to prescribed fire activities and includes direction that allows flexibility for restoration and maintenance of ecosystems while addressing public safety and health concerns.

Grass Cover:

Grassland (Montane Subalpine Grasslands and Colorado Plateau/Great Basin Grasslands) woodland (Juniper Grass, PJ Grass, PJ Sagebrush) and shrubland (Sagebrush Shrublands) ERUs have significantly less grass cover and productivity as a result of legacy (historical) grazing from livestock, wildlife grazing, roads, and the exclusion of wildfire. Years of grazing over large portions of the forest has reduced vegetative ground cover as a result of herbivory and soil compaction (mostly in high traffic areas such as near water sources). This lack of cover contributes to accelerated erosion and declined soil productivity, especially during periods of drought.

Erosion can have significant impacts on these ecosystems as dry, low elevation ecosystems already have shallow soils. Soil loss can lead to shifts in species composition with increases in shallow rooted grasses which are less effective in stabilizing soils. These shifts and increases in bare soil can lead to increased chance of noxious weed infestation. Reductions in grass cover also decrease the amount of water that penetrates into the soil while increasing the water that runs over the ground. This reduces the amount of water available to plants, creating a loop that thereby continues to reduce vegetative cover.

The encroachment of trees and woody species as a result of decreased fire also threatens these ecosystems. Fire is significant in these systems as it removes litter, limits woody species germination and growth, and allows new lush grasses and shrubs to germinate and take advantage of the short-term release of nutrients in the ash.

Plan Need for Change

1. There is a need for desired conditions and standards and guidelines that allow for the restoration and maintenance of grass productivity. This includes the desire to limit and reverse woody species encroachment (shrubs and trees into grasslands and shrublands) which reduce herbaceous cover and lessen the extent of grassland ecosystems on the landscape.
2. There is a need for standards and guidelines that emphasize the restoration and conservation of native grass species in all ecological types consistent with the respective desired conditions. Native grasses on much of the landscape have been replaced with non-native and/or invasive species and are not as effective in the prevention of erosion or as productive for forage.

Riparian Ecosystems:

Riparian systems have been degraded and are at risk across the Forest. Higher soil moistures, cooler temperatures, and greater productivity typically characterize riparian areas. However, human alterations to the landscape such as the diversion of waterways, the introduction of invasive plants, unauthorized use by cattle, and recreational impacts are altering these systems. The development of roads, grazing, and recreational use (including trails and dispersed recreation) are deteriorating understory vegetation, causing significant departures from reference condition in species composition and proportion of bare soil. Roads located near riparian areas can also negatively affect stream bank stability, ultimately causing erosion and sedimentation downstream.

Increased water demand (water withdrawal) and climatic changes (e.g., long-term drought) have also deteriorated these systems. Water tables are lower and there have been decreases in periodic flooding which is necessary for the regeneration of some important riparian species (e.g., cottonwood). This results in shifts in species composition and a reduction in available soil moisture. Bare soil and reduced native species allow for the introduction of invasive species brought into the area by vehicles, animals, people recreating in the area, and agricultural practices. These invasives in combination with adjacent uncharacteristically dense vegetation in the uplands have led to an increased risk of fire from the uplands entering riparian areas, where fire isn't a natural part of the ecosystem. Loss of riparian vegetation leads to higher water temperatures, increased erosion and sedimentation, and an overall decrease in water quality which negatively affects aquatic biota and wildlife. The impact on wildlife is significant; an endangered species that is a riparian obligate and fifteen species of conservation concern are dependent on the riparian area for their habitat.

Plan Need for Change

1. There is a need for management approaches that identify the impact of upland ecological health on adjacent riparian systems, particularly in regards to the threat of fire.

2. There is a need for desired conditions that identify appropriate composition and cover of riparian vegetation including the removal of non-native and/or invasive species while addressing the competing demands of recreation, grazing, and wildlife habitat (TES).

Restoration of Ecosystem Resiliency:

Resiliency is the ability of an ecosystem to regain structure, composition, and function following disturbance, on a time span that is consistent with dynamics of the ecosystem. The prevalence of so many vegetation types on the Santa Fe NF that are highly departed from reference conditions and at high risk of uncharacteristic wildfire is an indication of systems that are not resilient. Only a small percent (2% or less) of most vegetation types are treated annually on the forest, and restoration is not effective at these small scales. In addition, the current Forest Plan imposes internal management boundaries (management areas), often with different management direction, which artificially fragment the landscape within the forest boundary and make it difficult to consistently implement projects on the ground at a large-scale.

Stressors compound the challenge to effectively restore ecosystem resiliency. Climate change is predicted to further increase the fire risk, but may also impact ecosystems in unpredictable ways. Invasive species are continually being introduced and can pose serious threats. Flexibility in management options is essential to maintaining the ability to accommodate both predicted and unpredicted changes as they arise.

Plan Need for Change

1. There is a need to reduce the complexity of plan direction related to management areas which, in the current plan, fragment the landscape by their arrangement, boundaries, and differing management direction. This will allow for more flexibility for restoration and habitat treatments.
2. There is a need to develop management approaches that encourage working with neighboring land managers to implement projects at a scale that improves landscape scale connectivity across mixed ownerships where natural systems, such as watersheds and wildlife corridors span multiple administrative boundaries. Flexibility includes the need to manage landscapes in coordination with adjacent land managers and owners using information sharing and cross boundary project implementation and fostering an all-lands approach.
3. There is a need for plan standards and guidelines that prescribe how various activities can be conducted to ensure control of the introduction and spread of non-native invasive vegetation species by promoting the composition and condition of native species.
4. There is a need to incorporate flexibility to respond to stressors such as insect and disease and climate change induced effects (e.g., increases in fires, severe drought, flooding) into plan components, making them more adaptable to changing conditions.

5. There is a need to develop desired conditions and plan direction that helps manage for heterogeneity and biodiversity at multiple spatial scales (e.g., landscape, patch or stand and within-patch).
6. There is a need to incorporate updated science into management direction to better facilitate restoration.
7. There is a need to add plan strategies that emphasize large landscape restoration, including emphasis on cost effective stewardship contracts to improve implementation likelihood.

Other Resources

Water

Both natural and human caused disturbances are having impacts on the condition of the water resource across the forest. Although wildfires are a natural disturbance, the increase in their size and intensity (i.e., severity) in recent years is having a significant impact on watershed health. High burn severity leads to increased rates of erosion and sedimentation, negatively impacting water quality. Drought is also having a considerable impact on the forest; there has been a steady decline in the 10-year running averages of annual stream discharge since 1999. Roads are man-made and their presence on the landscape increases the delivery of water and sediment to the stream networks on and off the Forest. Likewise, grazing, recreation and other multiple uses will continue to impact the water resources into the future.

The result of these human-caused and natural disturbances across the landscape has compromised perennial stream water quality in many of the watersheds within the Santa Fe NF. Approximately 24% of the perennial stream miles on the Forest have been designated by the New Mexico Environment Department as impaired. Impairments vary but can include heavy metals, sediment, temperature, and bacteria.

Water sources on the forest are primarily used for livestock, private inholdings, campgrounds and administrative sites. Surface water supplies are limited, highly variable, and most are already dedicated to existing water uses. This means there is little to no "new" water available to meet future demands. As population around the Santa Fe NF increases, the lack of surface water will place a greater demand on ground-water resources both on and off the Forest.

The majority of the sub-watersheds on the forest, 87%, are classified as functioning-at-risk or impaired. Water quantity, riparian and wetland vegetation, roads and trails, and soils are the indicators that had the largest impact on the overall watershed score.

Plan Need for Change

1. There is a need for standards and guidelines that reduce sedimentation runoff into streams and for desired conditions that address the protection, maintenance, and restoration or resiliency of both riparian and upland vegetation.

2. There is a need for standards and guidelines to protect stream channel morphology and function on the Santa Fe NF.
3. There is a need for providing plan direction on the sustainable management of groundwater, springs, wetlands, riparian areas, perennial waters, and their interconnections.
4. There is a need to develop standards and guidelines for managing all watersheds (not just the Santa Fe Watershed).
5. There is a need to develop standards and guidelines that improve hydrological function by restoring vegetative cover and reducing erosion and sedimentation (e.g., reclaiming roads to their natural vegetative condition).
6. In anticipation of reduced water availability, there is a need for updating plan direction on managing for sustainable water supply for multiple uses (wildlife, livestock, recreation, and mining) including public water supplies.

Soils

Primary ecosystem characteristics; soil condition, and soil erosion hazard are directly linked to site productivity and soil resilience. Current soil loss rates exceed natural (minimum) soil loss rates across the Santa Fe National Forest. Generally this resource is at risk in areas where severe soil erosion hazards coexist with high fuel loadings (high risk of wildfire) and a drying trend that, combined, may result in high levels of accelerated erosion and decreased site productivity. In Juniper Grass, PJ Grass, PJ Sagebrush, PJ Woodland, RMAP Rio Grande Cottonwood/Shrub, and Sagebrush Shrubland ERUs, current soil loss rates exceed tolerable rates and risk for sustaining inherent site productivity.

Unsatisfactory soil conditions (loss of soil function) occur across 18% of the Santa Fe NF. In general, lower elevations and soils within Ponderosa Pine forest have the greatest risk for unsatisfactory soil condition. Historical grazing and management, increased overstories and associated decreased herbaceous cover and increased bare soil, and prolonged drought are negatively affecting soil condition in these areas. Although the higher elevations (Spruce-Fir, Mixed Conifer-Frequent Fire ERUs) have lower soil condition risks because more coarse woody material and litter are generated as a result of wetter conditions, they are at increased risk for stand replacing fire which is associated with accelerated erosion and decreased site productivity. Large areas of the forest with unsatisfactory soil condition loss, such as the extreme southeastern portion of the forest, may have persistent loss of soil function because they are not buffered by surrounding satisfactory soil conditions.

Approximately 51% of the soils on the Santa Fe NF fall into the severe soil erosion hazard class while the majority of the rest (48%) fall into the moderate soil erosion hazard class. Very few soils on the forest, less than 1 percent of the total area, fall into the slight erosion hazard rating. Severe and moderate soil erosion hazard ratings are also prevalent in areas with unsatisfactory soil conditions, which increases the risk to soil function in these areas. The majority of the Santa Fe NF has a high probability that accelerated erosion would occur if management disturbances

that expose the soil surface neglect to incorporate erosion control measures or when natural disturbances happen.

Plan Need for Change

1. There is a need to develop standards and guidelines that promote the maintenance and restoration of soil condition and function (hydrology, stability, nutrient cycling) that is not only specific to revegetation potential and the production of timber. This is particularly important in non-timber lower elevation systems where soil conditions have especially been degraded. There should be a focus on reducing the amount of exposed soil by restoring and maintaining sufficient vegetative cover including downed woody material.
2. There is a need to develop standard and guidelines protect and restore the degraded soil conditions found in grass and shrublands.

Range:

Vegetation analyses show that the grassland types commonly used for livestock grazing are trending towards unsustainable productivity. Declines in herbaceous ground cover as a result of woody encroachment and soil compaction and erosion may affect the long-term ability of national forests to sustain productivity of rangelands. Another risk includes introduced invasive species that out-compete nutritious native forage. Drought has also been a recent factor affecting this resource. In the past 30 years, an average 11% decline in precipitation has necessitated adjusting numbers and timing of livestock in order to compensate for reduced forage. Long-term climate change models show that these risks share feedback loops and are likely to continue.

Influences beyond the control of the Forest are also compounding these effects increasing the risk to grazing. They include fractured ownership of private lands, legal uncertainties about land titles, and endangered species listings by the US Fish and Wildlife Service, such as the NM Meadow Jumping Mouse, which requires strict protections for its riparian habitat.

Plan Need for Change

1. There is a need for management direction to the livestock grazing program that incorporates adaptive management toward ecosystem-based desired conditions, with particular emphasis on management in times of drought or other extreme weather-related events.

Recreation:

The ability of the Santa Fe NF to provide a meaningful recreation program is at risk of being unsustainable. The way in which people recreate on the forest is not only increasing, but it is changing. The forest has many developed recreation facilities that are utilized below their

capacity, are in poor condition, and/or do not meet the needs of today's public. The forest cannot adequately maintain all of its campgrounds to standard. Many of its campgrounds only have single-use occupancy campsites that experience low use, as more users desire group campsites. In some areas, the inability of the forest to meet the need for group campsites has resulted in increased impacts from dispersed camping. The maintenance backlog has continued to increase resulting in inadequately maintained recreation sites and a poorer recreational experience for users. Much of the forest's trail system is old and does not meet the needs of today's recreation enthusiast. Many trails are poorly designed and located, with limited intrinsic value for hikers looking for scenic beauty and challenging hikes. Most of the trails are in disrepair, not conveniently located for users, and/or provide an insufficient recreational experience.

Plan Need for Change

1. There is a need to update plan direction for sustainable recreation management to ensure that recreation resources are integrated into all resource management decisions.
2. There is a need for plan direction to address the long-term sustainability and intended use of recreation infrastructure maintenance, design and improvement. For example, trails that permit equestrian use should have trailhead parking that accommodates horse trailers.
3. There is a need to provide desired conditions for addressing changing trends in services, activities, and types of facilities desired by the public, while balancing those trends with other resources.
4. There is a need for the revised plan to provide desired conditions, standards, and guidelines for managing recreation activity impacts that occur in areas sensitive to resource degradation or at risk due to high visitation.
5. There is a need for plan direction to address user conflicts (e.g. recreational shooting, or between motorized and non-motorized trail users).

Infrastructure:

The Santa Fe NF's ability to maintain its current infrastructure is severely threatened. Although there are about 6,900 miles of roads in the roads INFRA database, only about 2,200 miles of roads are open to the public and forest users for motorized use (these are the roads on the Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM)), which provide access to both recreationists and other forest users. The remaining 4,700 miles of roads may be administrative use roads, or non-system roads (undetermined/unauthorized, other jurisdiction, or decommissioned). Most of these roads still contribute to erosion and sedimentation. Off-forest improvements to highways that connect to these roads and growing local populations have contributed to an increase in use. Ownership changes on adjacent lands, unresolved legal issues, new off-forest right-of-way regulations, and on-Forest dams not owned by the Forest Service all complicate management and increase costs. The largest ecosystem drivers impacting forest access are extreme wildfires and floods which impact the integrity of these systems, thereby continually adding to the already-massive deferred maintenance backlog on roads and administrative facilities. Another major stressor on the

infrastructure resource is the inability to implement the travel management rule because of lack of time, people, and funding.

The forest is engaging its public stakeholders through working agreements, but a critical and growing gap in resources for maintenance capacity for facilities and roads still exists.

Infrastructure as thought of in urban settings is not the only form of infrastructure. There is also infrastructure related to the more rural and agronomic uses such as timber harvest, grazing, and rangeland management. Many range improvements across the Forest are non-functional and also in need of maintenance or decommissioning, although many may be the responsibility of the range permittee. Non-functional water developments lead cattle to seek water in riparian areas, sensitive systems where it is inappropriate for them to graze. Downed fencing can contribute to cattle in these riparian areas as well as other areas they are not supposed to be. Unmaintained and vandalized range improvements can be death traps for wildlife.

Plan Need for Change

1. There is a need for plan direction that ensures the sustainability of management of infrastructure (roads, recreation and administrative facilities, range improvements, maintenance backlog etc.).
2. There is a need for plan objectives regarding road maintenance in watersheds identified as being impaired or at-risk.
3. There is a need for desired conditions that consider the reclamation of non-system roads.

Land Status and Ownership:

The ability of the Lands program on the Santa Fe NF to keep up with demand for access (in general and to private inholdings), encroachments from private land onto Forest Service land, title claims, evolving requests for communication sites, the ever growing Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) area, completing legal surveys, fragmentation, and a litany of associated problems, is a serious concern. The Forest cannot keep up with the increasing demands on this resource area.

Property owners within areas considered WUI often make demands for access and utility infrastructure across NFS lands. And when wildfires threaten large scale destruction of private property, millions are spent defending these private lands, and additional pressure is placed on the Santa Fe NF management to accommodate the rebuilding process after damage occurs through road and other infrastructure reconstruction. In recent years the real estate industry has enforced tighter standards for marketable and insurable title, which has resulted in a larger workload for lands and boundary management on the Forest. Private parcels are seeing more and more fragmentation, which leads to more demands and issues associated with access to the forest.

The Santa Fe NF's resources to address easement acquisition and defend title to NFS lands have been greatly diminished. Competing demands resulting from fragmentation of private lands and the pressure to authorize access and utilities severely limits our ability to address what is becoming a serious and important issue.

Plan Need for Change

1. There is a need for management approaches that emphasize better coordination with local governments in the management of the lands and boundary program to minimize conflict between local planning and zoning direction as a result of our decisions, while at the same time becoming more aware of how local regulation might enhance our own management goals, or alternatively, interfere with our own desired outcomes.
2. There is a need for plan direction that address how access to private lands is authorized so as to minimize natural resource damage, while at the same time ensuring the right of access to private lands granted by ANILCA is respected.
3. There is a need for standards and guidelines on the construction, maintenance, and inspection of utility infrastructure.
4. There is a need for plan direction that is more flexible to changes in technology and can be responsive to future needs and changes in communication site demand.

Other Need for Change Resources

Changes throughout the Plan

1. There is a need for plan language that is more strategic than prescriptive, including defining desired conditions to establish general visions and goals of how each resource should be managed.
2. There is a need for removing components that are redundant with existing laws, regulations, and FS policy. These will be incorporated in the revised plan by specific reference only, which will allow the plan to be up to date with the most recent versions without amendments.
3. There is a need to remove plan direction that requires developing additional planning documents, many of which require updates on a regular cycle.

Wildlife, Fish, and Plants

1. There is a need for standards and guidelines that incorporate best available scientific information (BASI) and contribute to the recovery and conservation of federally recognized species, maintaining viable populations of the species of conservation concern, and maintaining common and abundant species within the plan area.
2. There is a need to provide direction for restoring plant and animal communities with altered or changing species composition and structure so they will be resilient over time

and meet the habitat needs for a diversity of native plant and animal species, including suitable habitat for rare species.

3. There is a need to develop standard and guidelines that address terrestrial habitat connectivity for species migration similar to what existed naturally on the landscape. This includes direction for the restoration and expansion of native aquatic species range and connectivity of fragmented populations by improving aquatic passages..
4. There is a need for the identification of desired conditions for the restoration and maintenance of native riparian vegetation necessary for wildlife habitat.

Socioeconomic Resources

1. There is a need to add desired conditions to plan direction that recognizes of the Santa Fe National Forest's role in contributing to local economies, including service-based sectors such as recreation and tourism, timber, and other multiple-use related activities and products.
2. There is a need to add direction for streamlining the special uses permitting process.

Designated Areas

1. There is a need for monitoring elements around designated areas in addition to wilderness and wild and scenic rivers.
2. There is a need for plan direction to update wilderness management direction in order to protect and enhance wilderness values and character.
3. There is a need for the revised plan to identify and evaluate potential additions to the National Wilderness Preservation System.
4. There is a need for the revised plan to identify and evaluate eligibility of rivers for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

Scenery

1. There is a need for the revised plan to fully integrate scenery management as a part of ecosystem management for the national forests, allowing for activities that support ecological health and that create and enhance diverse wildlife habitats, while retaining and enhancing pleasant and interesting scenery that supports tourism. The plan should recognize that scenery management can be integrated with restoration, habitat diversity and timber management to further positive outcomes for all resources.

Cultural Resources

1. There is a need for updating direction on the stabilization and preservation of historic properties, including archeological sites, historic structures, and traditional cultural properties.

2. There is a need for plan direction aimed at managing for Native American traditional cultural properties and sacred sites, and non-Native American traditional cultural properties, while conserving anonymity of such sites where appropriate.
3. There is a need for plan direction aimed at historic and contemporary cultural uses, including both economic and non-economic uses for tribes and for those traditional communities not considered under tribal relations (i.e., traditional Hispanic and Anglo communities).
4. There is a need for desired conditions in the plan that address the alignment of heritage resources management objectives (the management of historic properties and landscapes, sacred sites, contemporary uses) with other resource management objectives (particularly but not limited to ecosystem restoration).
5. There is a need for standards and guidelines that protect historic and fire sensitive properties at risk of damage or destruction during catastrophic wildland fire to extent possible.

Areas of Tribal Importance

1. There is a need for management objectives that include opportunities for integrating forest restoration and tribal cultural needs and for working across boundaries in partnership with tribes to manage landscapes and address threats to adjacent tribal resources through the Tribal Forest Protection Act of 2004, to meet common objectives identified in tribe and pueblo land management plans, and to utilize an "all lands" approach to resources management. Desire for FS sponsored Education
2. There is a need for clarifying direction on design, location, installation, maintenance, and abandonment of towers, facilities, and alternative infrastructure within electronic communication sites, giving due consideration to the value and importance of high places (mountaintops and ridges) that may be identified as a sacred site or part of an important cultural landscape by tribes. Scenery issue too. But see the lands need that says we need more.

Extractive multiple uses

1. There is a need for desired conditions that provide a variety of forest products used by commercial, noncommercial, tribal, and land grant use.
2. There is a need for plan direction that allows for a diversity of size criteria regarding timber extraction.

Minerals

1. There is a need for the plan to better define the use of common mineral materials, such as personal use rock permits, commercial contracts, ceremonial use and free use permits.
2. There is a need for desired conditions that address potential proposals for transmission corridors and renewable energy generation, including wind, solar, biomass, and geothermal, while protecting natural resources, heritage and sacred sites, traditional tribal activities, and scenery.